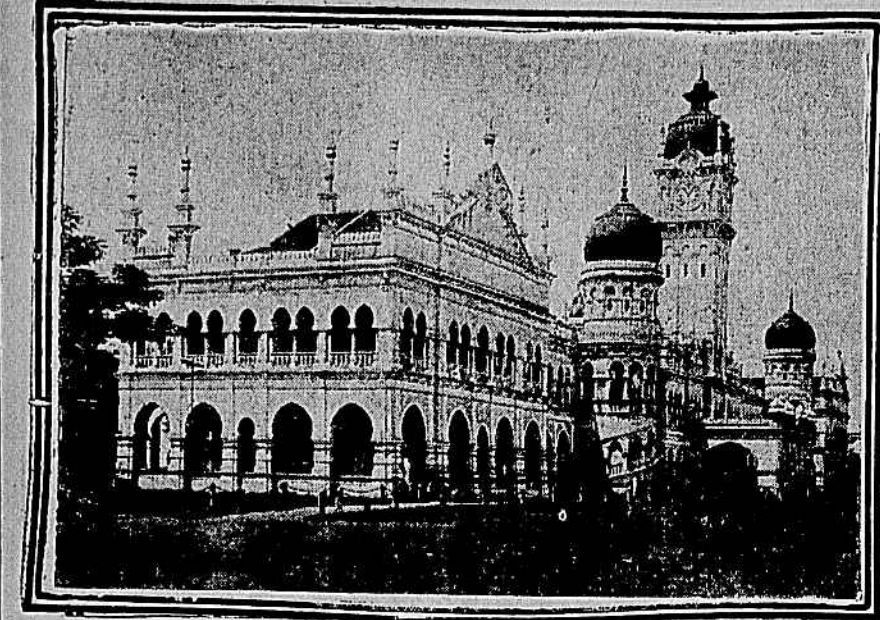


Among the Malays---How the British Are Remaking a Nation. Fortunes in Rubber and Tin---Behind Scenes With Sultan



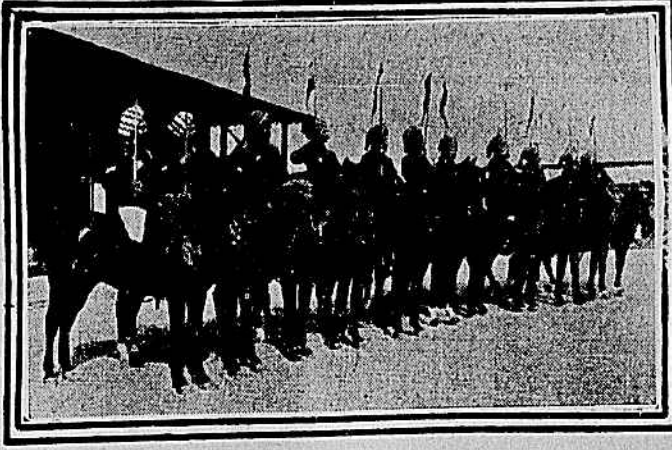
GOVERNMENT OFFICES AT KUALA LUMPUR.

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

I want to tell you of the new movements among the Malays. A generation ago this peninsula was savage and the country a jungle. It had neither roads nor railroads, there were no resting places for travelers and the wilderness was inhabited chiefly by wild beasts and wild men. To-day the English have taken hold of it and are making it blossom like the irrigated lands of our New West. They have brought order out of chaos, and are building roads and railroads, establishing schools and laying out towns. In the Federated Malay States, which contain something like a million inhabitants, more than five hundred miles of railways have been built and more than three thousand miles of cart roads and bridge paths. There are hotels in the capitals and outside them new government rest houses, where travelers can stay over night. Thirty-five years ago the people of the country had never seen a postage stamp. Today the post office is handling more than ten million pieces of mail every year, and the post office savings banks have deposits running into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Laws, Courts and Schools.
The population is rapidly increasing. It has more than doubled since English took hold, and it is being transformed from savagery to civilization. The laws have been reorganized and courts have been established. There is a good police force, and the British government has a battalion of troops, known as the Malay States troops, who keep excellent order. Schools have been started, hospitals erected and public works of various kinds are well under way.

In the State of Perak more than one hundred and fifty miles of canals and irrigation ditches have been dug, and the close of last year in the neighborhood of 150,000 acres of rubber trees had been planted. There are now something like twenty million such trees on the various farms, and tens of thousands will be set out this year. The forests are being exploited, mines opened and the country prospected for silver and gold. From one State alone as much as eighty million dollars' worth of tin has been taken, and all something like twelve thousand acres of gold are mined every year. In addition they are finding lead, iron, copper, as well as mercury, bismuth, silver and zinc. This country is said to be very rich, but no one knows what it contains, although a rude sort of mining has been going on for



THE GUARD OF THE SULTAN.

ages. The Malays are noted for their work in "precious metals," and the sultans of the past had goldsmiths and carvers of silver, ivory and wood. Some of them demanded gold and silver trees and flowers as a part of their annual tribute, and the Malay spears and kris blades with gold have always been noted.

The Malays of the Peninsula.
But before I go further let me tell you something about the Malays as they live here in their own home on the tip end of Asia. They are the first cousins of our Filipinos, and belong to the race which has overrun the Dutch East Indies. There are something like twenty-five millions of them in Java, a large number in Borneo, and millions in the Philippine Islands. The natives here are better looking than the Moros, but they have the same brown skin, the same sturdy form and swaggering ways. They are clean limbed, well made and no means bad looking.

Down here at the straits they dress in a bag-like skirt known as the sarong, above which is a jacket which falls to their hips. The sarong reaches from the waist to the calf. It is a gay, figured calico bag, often of plaid, which is open at both top and bottom, and the Malay puts on his clothes he steps into his bag, raises its top to his waist and by a twist of the wrist fastens it there in a knot. Under the bag he may wear calico drawers, or if poor he may be naked. The rich wear pantaloons of bright colors or white duck,

but the sarong is always over the rest of their clothing. It seems to be the badge of the race, as are also the handkerchief turban and sandals or slippers.

Here at the Straits of Malacca the Malays have been contaminated by foreigners. The Europeans have taught them to drink and through the Chinese they have become opium smokers. They are not so good consequently as the people of the wilds. They are naturally lazy and have become the loafers of this part of the world. Some of them act as coachmen for the rich Chinese or Europeans. Others do light work about the towns, and a few live in villages scattered over the islands, laboring only enough to keep soul and body together. Now and then one meets a rich Malay from the mainland, the son of official or perhaps of a sultan, but as a rule the Malays of the straits are shiftless and poor and they grow worse off every year.

The Federated States.
If one would see the race at its best, he should go to the peninsula and travel through the British States. There are other provinces belonging to Siam and Johore where the progress is by no means so great, but in the Federated States he will find towns which have sprung up in the jungle and public buildings equal to those of Japan and India.

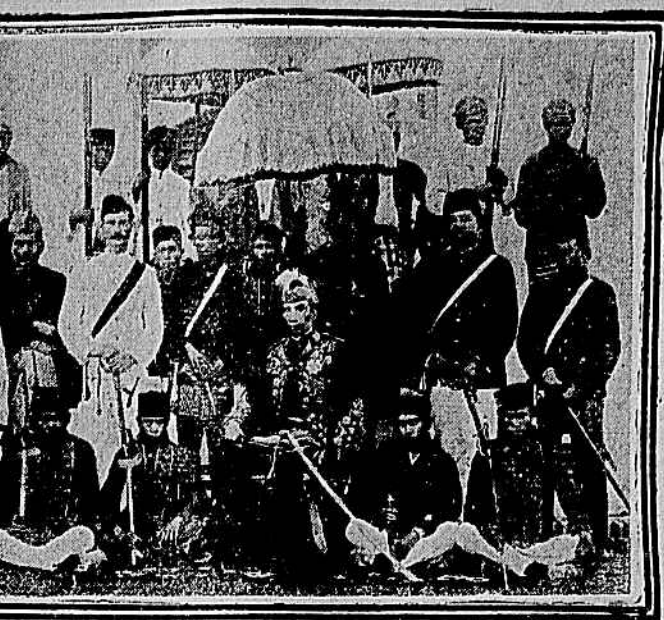
But first let me tell you what these States are. If you will take your map of Asia and look at the Malay Peninsula, you will see that it begins almost on the equator and runs a thousand miles or so northward, the upper part belonging to Siam. About four or five hundred miles from the straits these British possessions begin. At the top is Perak, not as big as New Jersey, and farther down the coast Selangor and Negri Sembilan, which combined are about the same size as Perak, while east of them lies the big province of Pahang, which is almost as large as Massachusetts and New Jersey combined. The four States altogether have more than 25,000 square miles, or about 2,000 more than West Virginia.

The Sultans.
Each State is ruled by a native sultan with a British official as resident adviser. The sultan is merely a puppet and the British pull the strings. Under the sultan are numerous native officials, the most of whom have English agents to help them, the whole government being similar to what the Dutch have in Java. The common people think they are ruled by Malays, but the better classes know that the British are the real power behind every office and that John Bull is king.

These sultans live in great state. Their uniforms are decorated with gold leaf. They have gold-hilted swords, and when they go about they have servants who carry gorgeous umbrellas to shield them from the sun. They have as retainers men with spears and swords, and the common people bow down to the ground in their honor. Each sultan has his palace and a certain amount of money allotted to him by the British. The taxes are levied and collected under the direction of the British, and the revenues are expended as they see fit.

In Kuala Lumpur.
The chief city of these States is in Selangor. It is Kuala Lumpur, and it has a population of about forty thousand people. It is here that the head offices of the British government are, although the States are ruled by the Governor of Singapore. Kuala Lumpur may be reached by steamers from Singapore and by rail from the coast. It lies some distance inland and has no direct connection with the sea. The town has magnificent government offices, several club houses, a hotel and numerous stores. It is a rich tin mining district, and it has a large population of Chinese, who are either interested in or work in the mines.

Outside the city plantations of coffee, pepper and cocoa have been started, and the State has recently been granted lands on special terms for the planting of sago, pepper, gambier and rubber. The government consists of the sultan, his highness Alim-Ed-Din-Suleiman-Shah, and the British resident, H. Conway Belfield. There is a council of State connected with them and there are separate offices for the Secretary of Chinese Affairs, for lands, mines, revenue, treasury and public



EACH STATE IS RULED BY A NATIVE SULTAN.



The Houses Are of Boards With a Thatch of Palm Leaves.

works. The English clerks number several hundred, and in addition there are other foreigners engaged in mining and exporting. The town has a park, a native bazaar and a gambling farm licensed by the State. The British claim that the Chinese will gamble anyhow, and that the best way to restrict the vice and to make money out of it is to tax it.

Gambling and Opium.
Sir Frank Swettenham, who was the resident general of the country for a

long while, claims that the gambling habit is ineradicable among both Malays and Chinese, and that it would take one policeman to every Chinese to stop it. He says the Malay rulers object to having public gambling forbidden, and that they refuse to give up the revenues which come from it. According to law, gambling is now illegal only in places and in buildings approved by the police, and that within certain hours. It is provided that it must be for ready money and in the halls open to all. The players are nearly all miners. The men who own the gambling houses aid in the suppression of lotteries.

The opium curse is handled in about the same way as the gambling. It is farmed out to the highest bidder, and he alone has the right to deal in raw opium and to make it into the chandu in which it is used for smoking. With the consent of the government he gives out licenses for the sale of this stuff and sells it at the price fixed by his contract. A chest of Indian opium costs about \$750 and upward. When it is turned into chandu it is worth \$2,500 and perhaps \$3,000. So you see, there is a big profit in the business. The selling of liquors is farmed out the same way, as is also pawnbroking. It may be questionable whether such things are creditable to a Christian government. They seem a blot on the British administration, which is otherwise almost beyond criticism.

States Without Debt.
These Federated States are among the few colonies of the world which have not spent every year and none of them owes a cent. The revenue of Perak amounts to something like \$15,000,000 and its expenditures are less than ten millions. Selangor takes in over ten millions per annum and it must spend seven millions to run the State. Negri Sembilan has receipts of \$2,200,000 and spends about two millions. The only State which runs at all behind is Pahang, and it is yet on the edge of its development. The governments are managed for the people and the money raised goes back to them.

The news railways are almost self-supporting. Their receipts last year were \$5,200,000 and their expenditures just about one hundred thousand dollars more. This, in connection with the fact that the railways are building and the fact that the roads are practically new to the country, is surprising. The customs receipts last year brought in over twelve million dollars and licenses almost five millions, the latter being largely made up from gambling, opium and pawnbroking receipts.

The government spent last year over five million dollars on public works, and it is encouraging the development of the country along the lines of agriculture. In all the colonies plantations are being set out and large agricultural estates started. I have before me a list of these estates, and among the crops are rubber, coconuts, cloves and pepper, and they are largely owned by syndicates and other associations. Many of the estates are of a thousand acres, and some of ten thousand and twenty thousand each. Among the chief crops are rubber, rice and coconuts. The Chinese grow sugar, and the government has started pepper plantations and there are only about seven millions to run the kind of this will be set out. I have already written as to rubber. Many of the new plantations are of para trees, which begin to yield a profit of \$100 per acre per annum at seven years and which should produce \$200 per acre at fourteen years. It is estimated that when the trees are twenty years old the profits will be \$750 per acre per annum. The trees grow well and yield abundantly. At nineteen years

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References: Told National Bank, Sedalia, Mo. Could you do a better advertisement for this notice to some poor sufferer of Eczema?

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old one recently gave twenty-five pounds of rubber at a single tapping. That tree was ninety feet high, and at three feet from the ground it had a girth of eighty-eight feet.

At present the planters find it hard to get laborers. The Malays are not anxious to work, the Chinese are miners, and it has been necessary to go to India to find workmen for the plantations. These are brought here in large numbers and seem to thrive.

The Drones of the Orient.

Indeed, I doubt whether any civilization will make the full blooded Malay an industrious man. This is true of the Philippines, and you will find few steady workers among the Malays of the Straits Settlements or the Dutch East Indies. These people do not believe in laying up money where moth and rust will corrupt. They want enough to support life, to dress in good style and to give a feast when their children are married. Their needs are few, and when supplied they lay off until want comes. Some of the rulers tell me they cannot get their own subjects to work their plantations, and the Sultan of Johore, who governs the State on the mainland opposite Singapore, says that he has to get Chinese coolies to do his work, for his own men will not labor.

How the Malays Live.

I have visited some of the Malay villages. Their houses are scattered about under the trees near the roads. They are usually huts about fifteen feet square, made of bamboos or boards with a thatch of palm leaves. The average house has only one or two rooms, the people eating or sleeping where the cooking is done. Their kitchen furniture is an iron pan and a cocconut ladle, with perhaps a pot for their soups and stews. The bed is a mat spread on the floor, and the family sprawl there at full length while resting. The people of the interior live not unlike the poorer classes of our Philippine Islands, and their customs are much the same. Nearly every one chews the betel nut, and men, women and children smoke cigarettes and cigars. I have seen girls of five and six with cigarettes in their mouths, and the babies are taught to smoke by the time they are able to crawl.

As to the betel habit, this is universal. It consists of chewing the nut of the areca palm mixed with tobacco and lime.

As the people chew they spit, and

their saliva is the color of blood. The habit turns the teeth black, swells the tongue and puffs out the lips and makes them crack. The chewing is said to take away hunger and fatigue, and the habit once acquired is seldom broken. I see old women pounding the nuts to a powder that they may masticate them between their toothless gums. The better classes have betel spittoons, and betel boxes for the lime, leaver and nuts. Some high officials have their chewing malds—girls who carry about the betel sets, and offer the delicious materials to them from time to time, presenting the spittoons at intervals.

The Malay Women.

These Malays, like our Moros, are Mohammedans. They study the Koran, keep Ramadan, and if they can afford it have several wives. The girls are especially fine looking. They have light brown skins, long black hair and beautiful eyes. Their noses are inclined to be flat, but their teeth are like pearls where they are not betel chewers, and they have high foreheads and good faces. Many have small waists, small hands and small feet with square toes.

They are sometimes married at fourteen, but the more common age is from seventeen to twenty. The parents arrange the marriages, and the wedding is long, tedious and expensive. Wedding presents are usually in money, and it is expected that every guest will give what he can.

After the marriage the husband frequently leaves his wife with her parents for several months, and then takes her home. He is expected to have one house for each wife, and it is his duty to treat each of his four wives alike, and to divide up his time equally among them. If he makes a present to one he ought to give a present to each of the others, and if he does not there is trouble.

Divorce is quite as easy in Malaysia as in other Mohammedan lands, but the Malay woman has the right of her own volition to free herself from her husband. She need wait only 100 days before she may marry again. The married women are to a certain extent independent. Many of them assist their husbands, and in some of the States officers with salaries are given to the ladies connected with the court. (Copyright, 1910, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

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